Esther's Defense of Her People Viewed as a Drama-Book of Jonah

Has But Little Historic Verity.

"A Drama of Court Life" was the special topic of Dr. Lyman Abbott's Bible lecture at Plymouth Church last night. As a preliminary to the lecture proper Mr. Abbott, in answer to inquiries received, again explained that his purpose in this series of sermons is to consider the Scriptures from a purely literary standpoint, apart from all theological prepossessions, in other words to approach the Bible as he would approach any other book. I think myself that it condifferent from the message to be found in any other collection of literature in all human history. But whether this be true or not, we can tell better after we have finished our examination of the various books of which the collection is composed. The question what assumptions you would allectures on the general message of the Bible. He then repeated his definition of fiction as a vehicle for conveying instruction or inspiration, and the line between the earlier epic history and the work of the moral writer of fiction is not closely enters the King's harem. She becomes his Thus the epic historian and the historical novelist have the same fundamental purpose. They each of them are using narrative as a vehicle for some other instruction than that which is contained in the mere narrative itself. One seizes historic events, but tells the history, not for the purpose of giving exact information, but for the purpose of offering a certain kind of inspiration; the other takes events, invents them if you will-also for the purpose of conveying moral instruction and inspiration. Thus, in our earlier literature the later forms of literature. Mr. Abbott then said:

events and has grouped and narrated them in such a way as to make them the vehicle for conveying the lesson which he wishes to teach. But the value of the narration is not in the exact correspondence with fact, but in the moral or spiritual lesson conveyed by the narration. When this view presented and the suggestion is made that there is fiction in the Old Testament, some people are alarmed, their faith is disturbed. They will ask, perhaps, "If you allow that there is any fiction in the Old Testament, how can we discriminate between what is fiction and what is fact?" Well, my friends, in the first place, wherever we come upon narratives in the Old Testament in which it is not perfectly clear what is fiction and what is fact, it makes no moral difference which it is. It is actually a matter of no concern whatever spirtually whether a great fish swallowed Jonah or not. No man is better for believing that a great fish swallowed Jonah. No man is worse for believing that a great fish did not swallow Jonah. Nothing whatever in your life or mine depends upon the opinn which we entertain upon that subject. We all see and know that Jesus Christ used fiction-or at least we think so. "A certain man had two sons, and one of them said to his father, Give me the portion of goods that belongeth to me, and he divided o them his living." The story that begins n this way is not history. It may have been that Jesus did know a man who had two sons, one of whom went off and spent all his substance in riotous living, repen'ed, came back in rags, was received and welcomed and reinstated. Such an event very well may have occurred, but it does not make any difference whatever to the truth of the parable whether it occurred or not. The truth of the parable lies in the illustration which it affords of forgiving matter of absolutely no consequence. On the other hand, when we come to those events in respect to which it is important that we should know it is perfectly clear. An unbeliever may think that the story of the crucifixion is not true; he may think that the story of the resurrection is not true; but it is impossible that he should think they are fiction. That is, it is impossible that, as he reads the four gospels, he should think that someone wrote the story of the resurrection or of the crucifixion as an imaginary tale for the purpose of producing a moral effect upon mankind. He may think the writer was mistaken, but he cannot think that he was using his imagination, deliberately and consciously, either for the purpose of presenting a truth or for the purpose of draping a story. In short, whenever it is important that we should know what is history and what is liction the distinction lies clear on the face of the narrative. When it does not so lie clear, it is a matter only of literary interest, not of moral or spiritual importance, except in one respect. Undoubtedly there are some in this audience, and a great many in the larger audience reading these ectures, who will be disturbed in their faith by the suggestion that the story of Jonah and the great whale is fiction. If you find it is easy to believe in it, as I have not, I have no desire to disturb your belief. But, on the other hand, there are, it seems to me, an increasing number of persons who find themselves unable to believe the story of Jonah and the great fish. What I desire in these Sunday evening lectures is to show them that though they do disbe-Heve it, though they do think it a fiction | or a legend or a poem, though they believe it, in other words, to be the product of imagination and not of historic observation, still the moral lesson remains for them: they need neither, on the one hand, reject their faith in Christianity or in the Bible. or even in the book of Jonah, because they do not think God had prepared a great fish to swallow the man, nor, on the other hand. need they, ought they to play with their intellect and try to make themselves believe something they honestly cannot believe. For the injury to men of not believing has not been one tithe so great as the injury of making believe, pretending to them- to honor?" Haman says to himself, "Who

a faith against which their intellect revolts. THREE WONDERFUL STORIES evidence that it is historical lies in the first place in the structure of the book feast of the Jews which is preserved even of Haman-a great nation does not organize a feast for the purpose of celebrating a story. The book of Esther records, then, an imprint historical episode in the history of Israel. It records it with the free use of the imagination of the writer, who has employed that imagination in presenting in graphic, pictorial and dramatic forms events which, if they had been told by a scientific historian, would have been uninteresting and uninspiring. The four stories of Daniel of which I am to speak I do not know how to regard. It would be easy for me to assure you, on the one hand, that the book of Daniel was written by Daniel in his own time and is autobiographic. There is scholarly authority for that. would be easy for me to assure you, on the other hand, that it was written four centuries after Daniel, in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is scholarly authority for that. If one holds the first opinion then I think he must believe that the four stories in the book of Daniel are substantial history. If he holds the secfour stories come to him with historic authority if the first narration of them which we have in literature is written four centuries after the events which they chronicle. The third story, that of Jonah-I must speak candidly and frankly if I speak at all-I regard as wholly fiction-or, if it has any elements of historic verity in it y are so slight, so germinant, so remote, hat it is now not possfble to distinguish he work of the narrator from the original distory. This is not to say that I regard the book of Jonah as a myth; I regard it |

tion, or a dramatic narrative of historic The drama may be represented in five

the engineers who built his bridge of boats across the Heliespont, because it was destroyed by a storm, and then ordered the sea to be scourged; the Xerxes who, when his friend Pythias had given five sons to the army and asked that the eldest might stay at home, killed the son and cut the pit, we need to read and reread this story body in two that the army might pass be- of Esther until something of Mordecai's uptween the two parts; the Aerxes who, with the first disaster that came to his army ment fied, like the coward that he was, back to lives. his empire again; the Xerxes who, having done all this, and leaving the affairs of state in other and stronger men's hands, offered a price to any man who would invent a new pleasure and gave himself up, not to days and nights only, but to weeks of feasting and revelry. This Xerxes in one of his drunken orgies calls on Vashti, his queen, to come into the pres-ence of the court and show her beauty to the courtiers. For a woman to come into such a presence as this at any time would be a disgrace in any reputable civilization. For a woman to come unveiled into such a company in ancient Persia was a crime against womankind. With wise, womanly courage Vashti refused to go. The King instantly deposed her, but when the fumes of the orgy had passed away he awoke to regret his sudden action. His courtiers must find some way to pacify his anger or it would turn against them, so they sugtains a message vastly different, divinely gest to him to send out couriers, gather all the beautiful women of his kingdom, select the handsomest and put her in to this voluptuous, self-willed, and easily moved monarch. He sends the couriers. There is attendant upon the court in some manner a man that is a Jew, a Pharisee, a Puritan of the strictest sort, so far as Judalsm is concerned. He proposes his niece Hadassah, afterward and better known as Esther, for the place. To us Americans it seems strange that any guardian should offer his niece for such a place, in the harem of such a King. But we must remember that very honorable women sought the hand of Henry VIII, although they took the place which he had made vacant by bloody decree once and again, favorite. The first act ends.

THE VILLAIN OF THE DRAMA.

the scene. Cold, shrewd, deliberate, cunning, the villain of the drama. He has climbed his way, this Haman, close to the side of the throne. All other courtiers bow and show him honor-as even now today in America honorable men show honor to dishonorable men who have enough political power. But there is one man in this court who stands erect while Haman goes by, and Haman grinds his teeth and repersonal enemy. He hates the Jew with been a sharp line separating them, but it is all the concentrated hate of an Amalekite that has been put upon him. He comes to the King. "Behold, O King," he says, I have no doubt that the fiction of the "here is a great and foreign people who Bible is, for the most part, historical fiction. | death, take their property into your treaskeep not the King's laws; put them to That is to say, the writer has taken his- ury; you can confiscate ten million doltorical characters and, in general, historical lars; I am sure that I will pay the ten milion dollars myself and take the chances of recovering it. "Do as you will," says the careless King, and he takes from his hand the ring which contains the royal seal and gives it to the courtier. Haman issues the decree that on an appointed day all the Jews shall be put to death and all their property confiscated. And then he goes out, and as Mordecal stands erect before his enemy, looks at him and grits his teeth, again saying to himself, "Your day is coming soon." It seems a strange thing this decree to put a great race to death, or it did seem strange a few years ago. It does not seem so strange now, with Russia driving the Jewish people out of her do-mains, and Turkey deliberating massacring the Armenians in hers, and for the same reason that Haman and Xerxes plan to slay this Jewish people, because they are rich and prosperous and their property will add to the coffers of the empire. There is no mourning allowed in the place, there are no letters delivered at the harem; newspapers do not exist. Esther never knows what peril threatens her people until she sees sackcloth on Mordecai and sends out to bid him take it off. So communication is opened between the uncle and the niece, and he sends her back word: "The death of our race is decreed; you must not intervene." Perhaps she remembers what came upon Pythias when he offered remonstrance; perhaps she remembers that the engineers were beheaded because the storm broke up their pontoon bridge. She replies: For thirty days I have not been invited to meet the King; I am no longer his favorite; I can do nothing." And with a Cromwellian strength Mordecal replies: 'Do not think you will escape if your peoole are put to death. Who knows but you have come to the kingdom for just this very time and purpose." This strong uncle to the height of Christ's pictorial ideal is a perish I will perish." So the second act ends. She takes three days for prayer and fasting, and blds her people pray for her,

> who have never seen a woman come unasked from the harem to the King, approaches to his throne of king and places herself before him. It is a critical moment. Does it mean death to her or liberty to her people? He reaches out the scepter. Haman is at his side. She begs only this: "That you and this Haman take supper with me to-night; for I have prepared banquet of wine for you." She knows the King's weakness; she knows how to appeal to him. The invitation is accepted. The King and the courtier come and sit down at the banquet of wine. But still the woman's cunning, more than a match for Haman's malice, holds back her request. What wilt thou have?" asked the King. 'It is granted thee before thou ask it. "Only this, my lord," she says, "that you and Haman will come to another great feast to-morrow, and then I will tell you. His curiosity is piqued, his interest aroused. Perhaps that was the reason why that night he could not sleep.

too, and then she lays her plan with wom-

anly courage also. When she arrives, with

what heart beating and with what blood-

suffused face one can easily guess, she

presses through the throng of courtiers,

A SOPORIFIC FAILED. records to put him to sleep. What better "night cap," as Thackeray calls it, to use in this case it fails of its purpose, for in long ago two men had devised to assassicovered the plot and reported it, and so the King's life was saved. What, he says to the reader, has been done this Mordecai? Nothing. Well, something must be done. With that he falls asleep. The first one on whom his eye lights in the morning is Haman, and the first question with which Haman is greeted is this: "What shall the King do to him whom the King delighteth selves, or trying to coerce themselves into | is it the King so delights to honor as Haman?" He prescribes for himself what his vanity desires: "Put him on the King's horse, put the King's robe on him, put the King's crown on his head and let some great prince lead the horse on which he is seated through the streets of the city crying everywhere, "Thus doth the King to him whom the King delights to honor." "Well said, wise counselor," responds the King: "who such a prince of the first rank as yourself? Put Mordecai on my horse, put my robes and my crown upon him, lead him through the city and proclaim to all the people; 'Thus doth the King to him whom the King delighteth to honor." There is no room for objecting, questioning, hesitation or delay. With what bitter malice at his heart Haman fulfills this charge we are left to imagine. Then he goes home and tells his wife and his friends. His ob-

> aster. While he is counseling with her the messenger from court brings word that the | starts proclaiming this message; queen's banquet is ready, at which he is to sit down with the King. Still he has place | thrown.' in the royal favor, and to the Cacen's banquet he then goes, encouraging his heart with this hope. Again the King, merry in heart and ready to grant his Queen whatever she desires, asks her, "What wilt thou?" Then she slings herself at his feet with all the pent up anguish of her woman's heart eloquent in her cry. "My lord, the King, she cries, someone has devised my death and the death of my people, far and near; protect me, protect them. And the King, who has forgotten his careless gift of the death of the lewish reopie, forgotten the ring and the seal and the decree, responds, "Who has dared do this? "This is the man; this court favorite. wicked wicked Haman is seeking my life and the life of my people. The King in his flings himself on her couch to implore her mercy, and the King comes back, and. insult the Queen in my very presence?" the thing," says Xerxes, "hang him on it." One would say that a the Jews. Whether the narrator thought it more dramatic to give a different ending. or whether it is really true that a decree once issued could not be withdrawn, I will not undertake to determine. At all events,

sequious followers drop away from him.

Even his wife warns him of impending dis-

are slain. And so the story ends. I am only trying to open the Bible to you and let you read it for yourselves, but if there were time to point the moral. I would like to urge that in our day, with cowardice in the press, cowardice in the public life, cowardice in would-be leaders who ought to dare to face public clamor and dare not, and cowardice sometimes in the pulrightness and Esther's courage find lodgement in our hearts and fruitage in our

THE STORIES OF DANIEL.

The four wonderful stories of Daniel I

may assume that you are familiar with.

You know them as individual stories, and

I group them together only for the purpose

of pointing out their combined significance.

They furnish three successive revelations of

God. In the first story Daniel is called upon to tell Nebuchadnezzar what his dream has been and to interpret it. He does both, and Nebuchadnezzar, as the result of this report, reaches his first confession of faith respecting the God of Dan-"The King answered unto Daniel and said, 'Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret." This is his first discovery respecting Jehovah. The second story brings out a further revelation. It is resolved that there shall be in Persia uniformity of worship. A great pedestal, with the statue of the god upon it, is erected, and all people are required to bow down and worship that god. There shall be no dissent. It is one of the earlier instances of religious persecution. Daniel and his three friends are high in office, and Daniel, presumptively, certainly the three friends, refuse to bow down and worship. Those who are hostile dare not accuse Daniel him-They complain to the King that his three friends have violated the decree. The King calls them to account and this is their courageous answer: "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered and said to the King, O. Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning, flery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, But if not, be it known unto thee, In the second act Haman appears upon O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." The furnace is prepared, the heat is so great that the flames leap out and destroy the executioners. But the Son of God appears in the midst of the furnace with the three friends and delivers them, vhile, according to the Greek version, out from the burning furnace itself there issues that psaim of praise which I read in our opening service this evening. And so the King reaches his next article of faith concerning God: "Blessed be the God of Shad-Meshach and Abednego, who hath sent his angel and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the King's word and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any far more vague in the earlier than it is in for an alien race. He resolves that the god except their own God. Therefore, I On Europe, too, shall fall the night! race shall pay the penalty for the slight | make a decree, that every people, nation | She sees the victim overborne. and language which speak anything amiss By worse than ravening lions torn. gainst the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other God that can deliver after | Yet haply she shall learn, too late, this sort." But the King must learn a third lesson by his own experience. He is driven from his kingdom and for seven years he lives as a beast of the field; then his consciousness returns to him and he is restored again to manhood, and there comes the third and 'ast arti le in his creed concerning God: "And at the end of the days I. Nebuchadnezz r liftet up mine eyes unto heaven and mine under tanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose domi ion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to gene ation: And all he inhabitants of the car h are eputed as nothing, and He doeth according to His will n the army of heav n. and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?" Thus there three store whether they are histo y or 'ct n founded on fact have a connection. They con'a n three successive revelations respecting Jehovah. First, that He is the revealer of secrets: second, that He is a Saviour of them who trust in Him; and third, that He is the Judge and Ruler of mankind. The fourth story, that of Daniel in the lion's den, I pass by partly, because of the rapidly passing hour, partly because of the familiarity of the incident to you, while I go on to the

> JONAH AND THE WHALE. Jonah was a prophet in Israel; but the long after his time. Let us look at this story for ourselves and frame our own judgment respecting its nature and signifidepends on its historic accurancy, or a fiction told for the purpose of illustrating has great influence over this woman. She a great truth respecting the character of God, or, as Rev. Charles Caverno suggests, a satire on the narrowness of certain Jewish prophets, a kind of Hebrew "Bigelow Papers?" A prophet of the olden time is called by Jehovah to deliver a message to a heathen people. He does not believe in heathen people and he will not go from Jehovah by getting out of Jehovah's province of Palestine. He comes to Tarhish, gets on board a ship, thinks himself safely out of Jehovan's jurisdiction and calmly goes to sleep. Presently a great storm arises, the captain summons Jonah to join with the heathen sailors in prayer to their respective gods. They are sure that the gods are angry, cast lots, the lot falls on Jonah, and he confesses. "I am fleeing from my God." he says: "It is my fault."
> "What shall we do?" "Throw me into the sea; that will appease the wrath of my God, and He will let you go free." sailors are reluctant, take to the oars again, rowing with redoubled vigor, but all in vain. At last they put up their cry to Jehovah: "O God," they cry, "if we are doing wrong in taking the life of an innocent man, lay it not to our charge," and then they fling the acquiescing prophet into the sea. The storm instantly ceases. But the Lord has specially provided a great fish for this contingency-there is no reason to call him a whale, except that a whale is a great fish-provided as a means of At all events, sleep he could not, and he refuge for the now penitent prophet, who sent for some one to read him the court has shown his penitence by his willingness to suffer death for his apotasy. The great fish swallows Jonah and in its belly he composes a psalm. (Laughter.) I read Ewald's translation:

third of the stories which I wish to bring

before you to-night.

'I called out of my distress unto Yahve: He answered me: Out of the heart of hell I cried: Thou heardest my voice! For a whirlpool cast into the heart of the seas, and the current encompased me

round. All Thy breakers and waves passed over Then said I, 'I am cast forth before Still I shall look again-unto Thy temple 'Waters had surrounded me even to the life, the deep encompassed me round, Seaweed wrapped around my head;

Unto the bases of the mountains I went Bars of hell were closed upon me forever Then Thou didst raise from the pit my life, O Yahve, my God.

When my soul grew dark unto me I remembered Yahve: And unto Thee my prayer entered into Thine holy temple. They who heed vain idols forsake their graciousness But with loud thanks I will sacrifice to

Thee. I will pay that which I vowed! Salvation is Yahve's.'

Remember that this psalm is composed before as yet he has been delivered from the belly of the fish. Jehovah hears the prophet commands the fish, and it vomits Jonah upon the dry ground. Again, the command comes to him to go to Nineveh, and he goes. It takes three days to go from one gate of the city to the other. He forty days and Nineveh will be over-

THE LESSOON OF THE TALE Never before, or since, in the history of the world did so simple preaching produce so great results. He has preached but one day, when the whole city repents. From the king to the lowest peasant, all the people and all the cattle are clothed with of their repentance and in hope of forgiveness. Later Christ said when the Pharisees caled for a sign, that there should no With flashing eye she turns on daman, the sign be given them, but the sign of the wrath rises and goes out, and Haman great fish and the strange deliverance—they only knew that a strange, weird prophet looking on him there, cries: "What, will be Nineven shall be destroyed. God mercifully pardons Ninevah. Jonah is angry. To the Then the courtiers, who have been obse- curiously narrow-minded prophet it seems quious to him in his power, come in to as though all his preaching had gone for hasten his doom. He has erected just out-side the gate a gallows for Mordecai, "Just not this what I thought so long as I was in my own country? Therefore fied I be-forehand to Tarshish, because I knew that decree should go out for the protection of | thou art a God, gracious and merciful, long suffering and of great kindness, and willing to grieve for the evil." A curious accusation surely for a prophet to prefer against Jehovah. A curious ground, surely for a man to be angry with his God. Sul-The drama may be represented in five that the Jews may defend themselves ing himself from the sun under a broad parts. In the first act we see Xerxes on against their enemies, and in the battles leafed plant, waits to see what will happen als throne-Xerxes mispamed the great-a that ensue 75,000 of the enemies of the Jews in the city. God sends a worm which

gnaws the sheltering plant at the root; his arbor is destroyed, and the angry prophet is angrier than ever. The still patient Jehovah remonstrates again with the angry prophet. "Thou wast sorry on account of the gourd for which they didst not toil and which thou didst not make grow, which was of a night, and died in a night, and I, shall I not be sorry, on account of Nineveh, the great city wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle." And so the story ends-Jonah left sulking and cross, like a stubborn child, out in the hot, beating sun by the wails of Nineveh, angry because God is merciful. This is the story. I have tried to teil it as simply as I could. I am sorry that my simply statement that the psalm was composed in the belly of the fish made you laugh. I did not wish, and I do not wish, to raise a laugh respecting any religious faith or any book of Scripture. Nevertheless, I cannot but think the fact that that simple statement caused amusement shows the incongruity which lies in the very nature of the narrative. Some of you may think this history, some of you may think it a myth, some of you may think, as I think, it is a parable or fiction, told for the purpose of putting the narrowness and pettiness of even a preacher over against the graciousness and mercy of God. But whether you think of it as history or myth or fiction, you cannot fail to see in it this one great transcendent revelation regarding God-in the salvation of the pagan sailors, in the salvation of the penitent phophet and in the salvation of the repentant Nineveh. At least three or four hundred years before Christ said: "Many shall come from the east and the west and sit down in the kingdom of heaven, at least two thousand years before Faber wrote: "There is a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea," the unknown writer of the story of Jonah wrote this story, by its quaint humor, by its satire of a narrow prophet, by its splendid illustration of the wideness of the mercy and grace of God, to flustrate what only later Israel partially understood-that God is more than judge, more than king-is the Father and Savior of the whole human

Europe at the Play.

On that terrific stage afar Where burning towns the footlights are! O listless Europe, day by day, Callously sitting out the play!

So sat, with loveless count nance cold, Round the arena, Rome of old. Pain, and the ebb of life's red tide, So, with a calm regard, she eyed. Splashed with the blood of half the world. High was her glory's noon as yet; She had not dreamed her sun could set! As yet she had not dreamed how soon Shadows should vex her glory's noon. Another's pangs she counted naught Of human hearts she took no thought; But God at nightfall in her ear Thundered His thought exceeding clear.

Perchance in tempest and in blight, And lifts no hand and speaks no word, But vaunts a brow like theirs who deem Men's wrongs a phrase, men's rights a dream. In some blind hurricane of Fate, She held as fools' imaginings

The feet of Nemesis how sure. -William Watson, in the London Chronicle. OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

Last year the Salvation Army in London

provided 3,321,917 meals and 1,339,246 lodgings for poor persons. A man can hire a house in Japan, keep two servants and live on the fat of the land

all for about \$20 a month. The highest waterfall in the world is Cholock Cascade, at Yosemite, Cal., which is 2,634 feet high, or just half a mile. The grave of Robin Hoed is in a forest not far from Huddersfield, Yorkshire. It is surrounded by a modern iron ralling. The British Isles comprise no fewer than

It is said that posts planted in the earth upper ends down will last longer than those which are set in the natural position in

which the trees grew. Eighty years ago Spain's territory in the new world amounted to 5,000,000 square miles. Of this empire Cuba and Porto Rico are the only remnants, 50,000 square miles. The Japanese address letters the reverse of what we do, writing the country first, the state or province next, then the city, the street and number and the name last

It is the belief of Livingston that nearly all lions were "left-handed." He watched them closely, and when they desired to strike a fierce blow they always used the

In Europe the number of inhabitants to he square mile is 95,-in Asia it is 48, in Africa it is 15, in America it is 8, in Oceanica and the polar regions it is 3, in Aus-

Perhaps the most precious sword in existence is that of the Gaekwar of Baroda. Its hilt and belt are incrusted with diamonds, rubies and emeralds and it is valued at \$1,100,000. When you buy a few yards of cloth in

Japan the merchant always unrolls the whole piece and cuts off the inside end, in order that you may not have to take the part that is faded and shopworn. Cats can smell even during sleep. When

piece of meat is placed immediately in ront of a sleeping cat's nose the nostrils begin to work as the scent is received, and an instant later the cat will wake up. John Mills, as administrator of his father's estate, has sold at Rome, Ga., bale of cotton which his father raised 1872. The father refused to sell it at 22 cents, deeming the price too low, and had held it for a rise. It was sold at 5 4-5 cents. The famous London waxwork exhibition popularly known as Mme. Tussaud's has been established over one hundred years, and is now the largest exhibition in the world, numbering as, it does more than six hundred figures. Mathematical calculations show that an

fron ship weighs 27 per cent, less than a wooden one, and will carry 115 tons of cargo for every 100 tens carried by a wooden ship of the same dimensions, and both loaded to the same draught of water. By the law coming into force this year in Sweden a dwelling house must not have more than five stories. An attic containing a stove is reckened a story. The height of the building must not exceed the width of the street by more than five feet.

Although the Russian government endeavors to suppress with an iron hand all religious dissent from the orthodox belief of the Greek religion, there are more than ten million people in that country who will not acceet the teachings of that church. Bank of England notes are made from new white linen cuttings-never from anything that has been worn. So carefully is the paper prepared that even the number of dips into the pulp made by each workman is registered on a dial by machinery. In the long Arctic nights there is a constant difficulty in keeping awake. Greely had to make very strict rules to keep his men awake during the long Arctic night. Beds were not allowed to be made, and the men were compelled to get up and move

Buddhists believe that hades is a place of eight divisions, each with a form of punishment somewhat different from the other seven. In the first division, which is the easiest, the sinner walks eternally in his bare feet over red-hot needles, points up-

Perhaps no country in the world is better suited for the cyclist than Holland, where you may run for miles on end without meeting with an incline that even suggests a hill. In The Hague cycling is a universal amusement, horse exercise for ladies being the occasional exception. The aggregate amount of money given by

private individuals to American educational and religious institutions, to charities, libraries, hospital, museums, etc., during 1896, as collated by the Chicago Tribune, was \$33,670,120. This shows a gain of \$4,000,000 over 1895 and \$12,600,600 over 1894. An enterprising Scotch minister in Mel-

bourne has arrayed his male choristers in Highland dress, while the ladies are attired in the costume of the "Lady of the Lake." The hymns are sung to the strains of the bagpipe, and these innovations are so attractive that the church is crowded. On the recommendation of the British controller of prison industries it has been decided as an experiment to purchase dolls and have them dressed by female prisoners. with a view of profitable employment, to take the place of oakum picking, which is wholly discontinued as a task for women. The antiquity of legal methods is curiously illustrated by the recent discovery of the oldest will extant. This unique doc ument was unearthed by Professor Petrie at Kahum, Egypt, and is at least four thousand years old. In its phraseology the will

that it might be admitted to probate to-day, Jules Verne Still Busy.

is singularly modern in form, so much so

To our repsentative who interviewed him, Jures Verne appeared like "a retired general, or a professor of mathematics, or a secretary of state." He does not show his nearly eighty years. His manner are simple and kindly, and he is rather slow. Verne is still busy, writing two romances a year, though he publishes only one. He goes to bed at 9, is up at 4 and from that hour till noon he is at work.

POINT WHERE AMERICAN AND EN-GLISH WOMEN WIDELY DIFFER.

Women Make the Error of Undertaking Too Many Tasks-A Habit That Makes One a Bore-Odds and Ends.

Where an English woman is absolutely frank about her affairs an American is apt to be very reserved, says a writer in the New York Tribune; and there is something quite shocking to the sensibilities of the latter in the facetious way English people have of trotting their skeletons out of their closets for the edification of the public. Family misfortunes and even disgrace are mentioned in a matter-of-fact, impersonal manner that is incomprehensible to the more thin-skinned Americans, who would rather die than be pitied or discussed by acquaintances. On the whole, the English way is probably the better. It does not do to be hypersensitive in this world, and a thick epidermis that is impervious to the pin pricks of public comment and criticism is a blessing. If an American society woman is poor she

tries to conceal it, or at least to cast the mantle of conventional living over her makeshifts so that the public may not suspect how straitened are her resources; whereas an English woman of the world. in like case, would be quite frank about everything. "You know we are beastly poor!" she will tell you on first acquaintance, a statement which she deems a sufficient explanation why her gowns and her household arrangements are shabby, and why she ought not to be held responsible for either. "I know we are paupers, Ella," said a British attache who had married for love on nothing, "but I do think we might have clean antimacassars." This was before a number of smart people, who had been asked informally to partake of a "leg of mutton." "Why, my dear boy." she answered, composedly, "how can I keep them clean, when cook and nurse are obliged to do all the washing, and you will use hair oil?" With an American couple in like po-sition such a complaint and rejoinder would

The way the members of an English family discuss each other's failings and failures with strangers is incomprehensible to our country people, who, whatever might be their private opinion, would be preexposing their relatives to adverse criti-"I have four sisters," said a newly arrived Englishman at a dinner, "and although the mater has tried her level best, she has not succeeded in getting one o them off." "Have you any brothers?" asked his neighbors. "One," he answered promptly, "but he's gone to the bad; he's a regular sponge, too, and I'd advise you to look out for him if he comes to this country, for he never pays up." "How can you speak that way of your own brother?" exclaimed the young lady, quite horrified. "Why shouldn't I?" he answered, quite mystified, "if it is true?"

Family Festivities.

New York Post. The eightieth birthday of a grandfather set his children puzzling as to how to give him the conventional candle for each year and yet produce any really beautiful and dignified result. The table was a large one, children and children's children having been bidden to assemble in his honor. A 1,000 separate islands and islets, without counting mere jutting rocks or isolated pin- large iced cake, decorated with designs made from candied fruits and citron, laid into the icing in a sort of Oriental design, was the center-piece. Around this, a few inches removed, a shallow (inch deep) circular tin trough (inch and a half wide), painted white, held forty small candles and caught the drip, and, the points being put in by rule, the candles were exactly true. Around this purple and white grapes were

laid in a wreath with branches of ivy, the eaves of which were polished, intertwined. At proper intervals, so as to divide the table symmetrically, two other circles of twenty candles each surrounded low dishes of fruit and were in turn surrounded by ivy wreaths. No flowers were used; the candles, which in such a case should not be too small, were red, and the effect was very rich and dignified and suggestive of the ripe years of the honored guest. A good arrangement can be produced for a similar occasion by using dark, rich colored fruits in low dishes with dark green leaves and pure white chrysanthemums laid on the cloth, and setting among them, as

fancy may dictate, the low translucent porcelain red roses, which were once called "fairy lights," I think. The glow of a certain shade of these roses is most warm and beautiful, and is in lovely harmony with both the fruit and the flowers. The "pyramid" English tapers are the best adapted to give the strong steady light needed, and the metal stands which hold these lights should be most carefully concealed. Experiments in effects of which we have no pattern, in such costly material as

winter flowers, are things of which one naturally feels afraid, but I wish I could persuade some clever decorator, professional or amateur, to try, in place of the unvarying groups of palms and wedding bells and bowers, the result of some artistic grille work to give relief to the wedding group, or one of debutantes, standing to receive. Any form, height, width, can be used which fancy dictates, but the familiar screen shapes and sizes best serve the purpose; on this first a basis of green smilax, asparagus, winter-fern, palmetto leaves, whatever best suits the taste and purse, and on and in this green background, with long and short-stemmed flowers, such The effect of asparagus, filled in with the blossoms of spring bulbs, narcissi, tulips, jonguils, any or all the lovely tribe; the wonderful beauty of long-stemmed chrysanthemums artistically wrought into a background of palmetto leaves, or of matted ivy, need only to be tried to be demonstrated.

The finest bridal background I ever saw was made of red oak leaves in October; the bride's hair was of the sunniest golden hue, and her maidens wore white hats, They looked as if William Morris had woven the tapestry behind them, which in fact, had cost little labor and was made by the tasteful hands of the family.

The Feminine Egotist.

Dorothy Maddox, in Philadelphia Inquirer. Let's get right down to etiquette's solid basis this morning and see wherein we, who are really anxious to be considered lovable, are lacking in the gentle courtesies

You do not mean to offend and would be very much startled to be told you are considered a bore-you who have been seeking to become popular since you were knee high to a hoptoad. As a wee girl you can recall your anxieties to be popular with your playmates. As you remember your failures and your childish chagrin you can see that these same failures and these same chagrins have followed you up to the pres-

Sometimes you ask yourself the questions: Why am I not more sought after? Why am I not the center of an adoring circle of friends? Other women fairly hypnotize people. They are always increasing the number of their admirers while I am left with always the feeling of being out in the cold. It is so strange and so provek-

Listen. You are abominably selfish, and

I don't suppose you have the slightest suspicion of this fact? How can I tell? Because you adore talking about yourself, and although no one has been cruel enough to tell you, believe me. you are considered a bore. It isn't quite nice to put it so brusquely, but you must know the truth, so that you may reform. You are especially given to chattering about your daily trials. We have shadows enough of our own to dodge without having those of our neighbors thrown across our pathway. We have daily crosses to bear that are none too light of weight, without being burdened with other people's crosses as well.

clety at large with infinitesmal woes. Who cares a rap for your husband's lack of sympathy? Where can you find an attentive ear in which to pour your plaints of domestic broils? What possible interest can your cooks' latest caper or your chil-dren's newest pranks hold for any one outside of your immediate home circle, and even its members rebel when these subjects are harped upon too constantly. What if your dressmaker is a failure your man a scamp, your latest feminine crush a disappointment, your milliner a fraud? Do these small worries give you a

It is downright heathenish to inflict so

A bore you certainly become long perhaps before you are aware of the fact and the chances are you will never be made to understand why you are unpopular. Roam the wide world over and you rare-

right to earn for yourself the name of a

FOR FEMININE READERS

Mercury Went Down Everywhere Prices Went Down Here

Cloaks, Capes Jackets, : Suits, : Collarettes,

Muffs, Etc.

Any garment in the store (former prices from \$5.00 \$10.00 to \$18.00), your choice now....... \$5.00

CHOICE OF ANY TAILOR-MADE SUIT IN 17

Prices Marked In Plain Figures.

This sale is "to a finish." The stock MUST be cleared, regardless of former selling prices, and even cost prices.

Boyd, Besten & Langen

39 East Washington Street.

ly come across a woman who does not in- gets up in the morning he takes his bath. sist upon keeping herself and her affairs always in evidence. Society is chock full

There is a type of woman that the world cannot do without. She is well-bred enough to know that she cannot command love and admiration unless she does something to deserve it. She is a direct contrast to the feminine sniffler, the unhappy egotist who asks the world to accept and foster her selfishness. It is downright bad manners to whine,

sniffle, to grumble one's way through life.

It is a crime against our present day liv-

of just such neglected women. They grum-

ing to be so stupid as not to recognize the vast avenues that lead to a wealth of information which may be ours almost for It is the quintessence of good form these days of advancement to be able to say something when one opens one's mouth. Books, music, the drama, the latest

moves in philanthropy, affairs foreign and domestic are all replete with bright thoughts. If you are too lazy, too inert, too dense of brain to exchange them for others as bright settle down to the cultivation of that bit of etiquette which demands of us all that we should become good listeners. Whatever you do, spare the world egotistic

A Club Epoch.

New York Evening Sun. Thanks to the kindness of a well-known club woman of this city, the following letter now appears in print for the first time. The letter explains itself:

"Dearest Ethel-Of course you will want to hear all about our club breakfast that came off the other day. It was a great success. Such a glorious time; something to be long remembered in woman's clubdom; a regular epoch, you know, and all that sort of thing. I know we're only a suburban club, but really you never saw anything more inspiring. Our president wore a stunning imported costume of green and brown and a perfect love of a bonnet just to match. Our first vice president was got up regardless, too. Her gown was blue, with gold and white, and she wore a | and never hung well, ever at first, picture hat instead of a bonnet. The recording secretary was attired just as elegantly, her colors being red and black.

Never in all my life did I see anything lovelier than the bonnet of the treasurer.

In all my life did I see anything or of some exquisite lace falling over the hand almost to the finger tips, or, other-It was perfect, that's all there is to it: a mass of yellow roses and black chiffon with | in the shape of a shoulder strap of leafless jet ornaments and ebony ostrich plumes. There had been much anxiety on all sides as to what sort of costume the chairman of the executive board would wear, for she isn't exactly noted for her good taste in dress, but, if you'll believe it, my dear, even she rose to the greatness of the occasion and was simply charming in silvergray cloth and chinchilla. I tell you what, we all felt that our club has indeed not lived in vain when it had worked such a wonder as that. As for my own insignificant self. I wore one of those new wools in blue, and it was frilled all over with lavender silk. Doesn't that sound sweet? I must confess that it was one of the smartest frocks there, and every member of us was dressed for all we were worth. tapestries can be woven as few have ever I'm more sorry than ever that you weren't | Drap d'ete, French cashmere, in new able to be with us. How you would have | double weaves, and Henrietta cloth bid fair enjoyed it; you, who are so interested in | to be greatly favored among the smoothwoman's work and the advancement of the | surfaced materials next season. Either of sex. Well, never mind, I'll hope for it next | these three fabrics can be made up very year. Yours devotedly.

"P. S .- I forgot to say anything about the corresponding secretary's clothes, and | be finished with a narrow gimp or tiny jet they were really the most charming of all. Only black and white, to be sure, but, oh, | vest of folded chiffon over silk, a wide girso smart. And wasn't it queer, the best | dle, a full neck ruche and long mutton-leg speech at the breakfast-there were lots of speeches and that sort of thing, you know, in stylish appearance and one that is dear-the speech that made us all laugh in- adapted to any general wear short of a stead of want to go to sleep was made by gown for utility purposes. a woman whose bonnet was a perfect fright. Not one bit of style to it; honestly, there wasn't."

The Way to Sit. New York Ledger.

felt in the right place.

When our grandmothers were girls, and straight-backed chairs instead of cushioned straightness that was almost stiffness. themselves like duchesses. For it is the takes that determines the erectness of the figure. A prominent physician says that the proper sitting position requires that the spine shall be kept straight and that the

Therefore it is necessary to sit as far back in the chair as possible, so that the the shops for a few cents a yard. lower end of the spine shall be braced against the back of the seat. If this back is straight the shoulders will also rest against it; but even if the shoulders have no point of support, it will be found that they do not need it when the base of the spine is supported properly. This position makes no strain upon the ligaments of the spine. Every organ of the body is properly fixed by this attitude. The feet should rest squarely upon the floor; the hands should rest lightly in the lap, and thus perfect equilibrium and rest are secured. The arms should never be crossed, for that position causes a strain upon the spine, places a weight upon the stomach and diaphragm, and thus increases the labor of

support needed for the upper part shall be

digestion and respiration. The Pace That Kills.

Philadelphia Times. The pace that kills a business woman is the work she does at home.

Good, hard, faithful attention to business never killed any one, man or woman. Worry, and the "seeing to things" ideathese are the two nails in the business

Men sit in a street car and watch the

driver of a truck groan and tug, and try man will move to help that driver, or even sigh in sympathy. Every woman in the car is edging and peering and wishing she dared go out on the platform and "see to that

They try to carry the world on their shoulders, and they don't realize that the world is a great deal better off without their puny strength under it.

Business women try to do too many kinds of things. They are, most of them, "Jills of all trades." When a business man

goes in to the dining room and eats his breakfast, kisses his family good-bye and goes downtown to work, like a sensible ble over their lack of friends and have man. The business woman-do you know never stopped to consider why they are her? I do. I'll tell what what the business woman

does. She gets up early and goes into the children's room and fusses around for half an hour or so. If you ask her what she is doing, she'll say she's "seeing to things." She hires a servant-and waits upon her. She pays a dressmaker-and sits up nights studying fashion books for a new way to have a dress made. She buys a hat-and takes it home and tears it all to pieces and makes it over

She dictates to a typewriter-and then takes the "copy" and corrects it herself, She works herself ill over something she can't do, and ought not to do, and takes a rueful pleasure in a martyred spell of ill-

She worries about other people's troubles, she frets over other people's children, she almost takes medicine for other people's headaches, and she puts all her friends into nervous irritation trying to "see to them." If the business woman is worth one-half her salary, she puts all these things out of her mind at the office.

Various Hints.

Towel-shelves are much used in place of racks in the modern bathroom. They are of openwork nickel or silver plate and are fitted to the wall above the bath. Notwithstanding the rage for the small elegant Empire fans, the larger ones made of gauze and real estrich and marabout

feathers still maintain their hold on fash-

For all the pretty impediments of the afternoon tea-table there is still nothing so popular as drawn linen. There is a tendency to show less and less of the linen. Some of the cloths, doilies and trayservittes are as filmy in effect as morsels of fine lace.

The fullness of the latest skirts is carried well to the back, and they are narrowed and flatter at the sides; consequently they hang better than did the skirts cut completely on the bias or in circular form, which generally go out of place after short service and when the material was heavy

long transparent sleeves of tuile, chiffon or wise, we have only an apology for a sleeve roses, a jeweled band or may be a cluster of lustrous satin ribbon loops. Extremes meet in this matter of full-dress sleeves.

No one quite knows why, but every one does know that the table ferneries left persistently in the dining room dry and rust or grow in straggling fashion, or otherwise fail of their original beauty very quickly. Florists say gas, furnace air and various things in explanation. It is a good plan to have two or three of these center-pieces growing at once and change them about from an upper room that is not kept at top heat all day to the dining table. In this way the life of all will be much prolonged. Small baskets the size of the fern-dish may

hold the duplicates. simply or in combination with moire, corded silk or taffeta. The silk accessories may band, or a more ornate style will show a sleeves. This forms a gown equal to sik

Suggestions made to housekeepers by Mrs. Lincoln, the cooking teacher, are to buy bunches of wooden skewers to use in cleaning kitchen utensils-these penetrate corners and do not scratch; to use whiting to clean paint, washing it off very carefully and wiping dry with a clean flannel cloth; to use paraffine oil and turpentine in the proportion of one-third turpendivans were the usual resting places, the | tine to two-thirds paraffine, in wiping off doors and surfaces exposed to the weather; to use boiled linseed oil and turpentine (onethird turpentine) in oiling wood floors, this Then when they grew old they still held | for the occasional oiling; for every washing or wiping over put one tablespoonful sweet or paraffine oil to two gallons of water; keep oiling-cloths in some metal or stone receptacle; do not use old cotton and linen cloths for cleaning-they are not to be recommended for such purpose, but are invaluable to the nearest hospital, and should be religiously saved for that use; the best cleaning-cloths are made of the cheap coarse honeycomb material sold at

As She Is Called. Philadelphia Inquirer.

Any one who is named Polly should be cheerful and lively; no one could imagine a silent and dull Polly Sybil suggests softness and refinement, and Angelina sentimentality. Edith should be aristocratic, and Priscilla severe. Madeline is usually in novels a well-bred automaton; she dresses admirably, talks faultlessly and acts becomingly. Ruth should be simple, genuine, winning, full of modesty and sterling to the Pauline is supposed to be lackadaisical, pretentious and somewhat romantic. A certain hothouse aroma lingers around Blanche and Bertha. They should be kept from the trials and troubles of a stormy world. Fanny and Kate are hoydenish and somewhat scatter-brained. Mary is all that is good. Annie, gentle, graceful and good looking. Maud, somewhat reserved and aristocratic. Eliza, plain but good. Jane is good, serious and improves on acquaintance. Ellen is not good looking, but what men call a thoroughly nice girl. Dorothy, sweet, simple and charming. Ethel, just an average girl, and no more.

them for a time and then have them return agair. mean a radical cure. I have made the disease of FITS, EPILEPSY or FALLING SICKNESS a lifelong study. I warrant my remedy to cure the worst cases. Because others have falled is no reason for and a Free Bottle of my infallible remedy. Give Express and Postoffice address.

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